

SYLLABUS-BASED STUDENT CONTRACTS

Since one of the attributes of a syllabus is that it is a contract, both teacher and student need to have an active role in its implementation. While the teacher is the one who develops the syllabus, most often the student assumes a totally passive role. The following is one way to include the student as an active partner in the use of the syllabus.

Method

The purpose of the syllabus-based contract is to ensure that students read and understand the information contained in the syllabus, and that they plan to adhere to guidelines provided therein.

The following is a sample contract that can be attached to either a print or an online syllabus. It should be on a separate page so that it can be turned in without affecting the rest of the syllabus.

AGREEMENT

Course Number and Title _____

I, _____ have read and understand the syllabus
and

Name

the information it contains. I plan to follow and fulfill the requirements listed in the syllabus.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

A more specific version may include a check-off list including key items such as "attendance policy", "assignments", "homework", and "grading".

Benefits of this Method

1. It creates a shared responsibility for the course's outcomes.
2. It ensures that students view the syllabus and its contents with the right level of seriousness.
3. It eliminates the need to negotiate the "I didn't know" types of student pleadings.
4. It provides the teacher with a record of clear communication with the students.